

10-22-1907

Letter from Antoinette Rotan Peterson, New York,
New York, to Anne Whitney, Boston,
Massachusetts, 1907 October 22

Antoinette Rotan Peterson

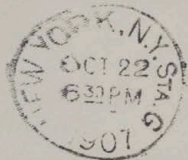
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Miss Anne Whitely
The Charlsgate

Boston
Mass.

Mrs. Peterson

4000 Maryland City

said to Charles Kingsley once,
"Tell me the secret of your
life that I may make
mine beautiful," and he
answered, "I had a friend."

The draped head of
your friend appeals especially
to me and since you give
me permission I will keep
it and place it in the
initial leaf before the
letter to A.M. But those
friends of yours and her inner
circle of whom you speak,
would not put their books

4 WEST FIFTIETH STREET.

New York

Oct. 22nd

Dear Miss Whitney

It was so kind
and charming of you to
write me something about
yourself and your friend
and to send me these
lovely pictures of her.
The face is indeed beautiful,
full of soul. The face of one
who might well have
looked a life long love
and affection. - Mrs. Browning

complete without a prospect piece of
the other partner to that rare
friendship! Is it too audacious
of me to ask to be adopted still
further? I should so like to
have a picture of you too.

Reading the poems over again,
one feels that one discovers a great
deal about you - and yet you have
veiled yourself too - You have
lifted the personal up into

something of the universal - I should
like to tell you how many lines have
stayed of their own accord in my
memory - of how wonderfully you
have succeeded in expressing in-
expressible things - "Dear, then, to her and
to the Silent Powers,

And borne on their strong wings above
defeat

and fear of mockery" - "Round them

Heaven's flaming currents stoop

and play" etc - other lines in the

same poem - "Behind my life another

life runs deep" etc. "I have won,

where was no face nor voice, a glance

a word,

A spirit, call it, that all shapes doth hold

And brings me knowledge which I scarcely

call mine

Ah! yes more evidence
of some wave of fine spiritual
influence which seems to be
passing over the world.

Such things as Maeterlinck's
Essays - Mr. Kipling's poem
to the Fine Romance or *They*
or *Kim* - or in science such
a book as R.K. Duncan's
New Knowledge seem to me
to give ground for faith in
a new era for the things of
the spirit - Do you not think
so?

But that those poems
of yours should have been

4 WEST FIFTIETH STREET.

"My shoul, Centred at last
in an unfathomed well"

The marble face of Destiny grows
fluent as I trace. These arteries
of broad being - and
many more I could repeat -
no more sure and delicate
touches upon the mysterious
sources of ^{indeed of all our being} glens have
ever been made in English verse.
If they had been written last
year I might have thought

written forty years ago in New England
seems wonderful. You must have
had a revelation. How difficult
to write of these matters, how easy it
would be to talk, how I should like to
hear what you would say -
whether such lines as those referred
to, will appeal to many, one dare not
prophesy. But the bursts of pure
song - "Beyond the singing land,
To that hoar silence of the lone mid seas
where turn, in unrelated strength
a bare, vast heart, throbbeth
beneath the eternal eye" - The description

of morning in the same poem -

"A leaf left living and alone in
wintry air"

"Some, the perfect instinct, flower of all
dimest potencies of choice, whose part
was set mid thais and blame
To keep the inner place of God"

such song as this is for all the
world - Shelley himself has not
excelled it -

Forgive me for being so lengthy - I want
you to know how strongly you
have spoken to me.

I am returning to you the other

Come and see you -

I need scarcely say that
if you should journey to
New York, you would confer
an extraordinary pleasure
upon us by letting me
know -

Most warmly and sincerely,
Yrs

Antonette Roran Peterson

4 WEST FIFTIETH STREET.

Photograph of Miss Manning.
not quite - feeling that you
meant me to keep both -

It should have been done
and this letter written before.
but for a press of matters
connected with our return
home after more than a
year's absence -
we are not often in Boston but
should we find ourselves
there again, we hope very
much to be allowed to